

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 16033 141040Z

20

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

CCO-00 SCS-03 AID-20 FBO-01 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NIC-01 NSC-10 SPC-03 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-03 USSS-00

RSC-01 PRS-01 SCA-01 A-01 OMB-01 SS-20 SY-10 NEA-10

DRC-01 INRE-00 CU-04 /137 W
----- 100135

O 140924Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7387

INFO AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL UDORN NIACT IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 16033

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: ANTI-GOVERNMENT RIOTS IN BANGKOK

REF: BANGKOK 16029

SUMMARY: AFTER A MEETING WITH THE KING, STUDENT LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) SIGNED A SECOND AGREEMENT WITH DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHAT CHARUSATHIEN LATE OCTOBER 13. MOST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNDER NSCT CONTROL HAD DISPERSED BY THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF OCTOBER 14. RADICAL ELEMENTS, HOWEVER, REMAINED IN THE AREA OF THE DEMOCRACY MONUMENT. THESE ELEMENTS HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR INCREASING LEVELS OF VIOLENCE DURING THE DAY. THE ARMY IS TRYING TO ESTABLISH ORDER AND WE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 16033 141040Z

HAVE REPORTS FROM RTG SOURCES OF SOME 130 CASUALTIES

INCLUDING 14 DEATHS. ALL RESTRAINTS TO VIOLENCE HAVE BEEN DISSOLVED BY THE MORNING'S EVENTS. CONFRONTATION CONTINUED TO BE VIOLENT AS OF 1600 OCTOBER 14. END SUMMARY.

1. ALTHOUGH LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND (NSCT) AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHAT SIGNED AN AGREEMENT ABOUT NOON OCTOBER 13 (REFTEL), STUDENT LEADERS MAY HAVE HAD TROUBLE CONVINCING SOME OF THEIR SUPPORTERS THAT A TRUCE HAD BEEN REACHED. THIS CONFUSION WAS ASSISTED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S TARDY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF A RESOLUTION TO THE CRISIS. NINE NSCT LEADERS HAD AN HOUR AUDIENCE WITH THE KING IN THE LATE AFTERNOON IN AN EFFORT TO CALM THE SITUATION. THE KING REPORTEDLY TOLD THE STUDENTS TO ACCEPT THE GOVERNMENT CONCESSIONS AND STOP THEIR DEMONSTRATIONS. THE NSCT LEADERS THEN MET WITH PRAPHAT. THEY SIGNED A SECOND AGREEMENT IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASED THE 13 EARLY CONSTITUTION MOVEMENT (ECM) DETAINEES AND AGREED TO PROMULGATE A CONSTITUTION BY OCTOBER 1974. THE STUDENT LEADERS THEN RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF THE DEMONSTRATION AND CALLED ON THEIR FOLLOWERS TO DISPERSE.

2. DURING THE NIGHT OF OCTOBER 13/14, MOST STUDENT FOLLOWERS OF THE NSCT DISPERSED. A NUMBER OF THE MORE RADICAL STUDENTS REMAINED IN THE AREA OF THE DEMOCRACY MONUMENT, HOWEVER. THESE STUDENTS BEGAN TO INITIATE MORE VIOLENT ACTIVITIES. THESE STUDENTS MOVED ON CHITRLADA PALACE, AND POLICE SECURITY FORCES REPULSED THEM AFTER SOME SCUFFLE. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER THERE WERE ANY CASUALTIES AT THAT TIME BUT THERE WERE PROBABLY SOME INJURIES.

3. AGITATORS SUPPORTED BY ROWDY ELEMENTS FROM THE VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, WHO HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS BEFORE, SEIZED THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICES NEAR THE DEMOCRACY MONUMENT. THE THAI GOVERNMENT RADIO ANNOUNCED THAT THE AGITATORS HAD BEEN REMOVED FROM THE PRD OFFICES WITHOUT VIOLENCE AT 1040. THAT SAME ANNOUNCEMENT REPORTED THAT ONE POLICE-CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 16033 141040Z

MAN HAD BEEN SHOT AND SERIOUSLY WOOUNDED (HE REPORTEDLY LATER DIED). THE AGITATORS APPARENTLY REOCCUPIED THE PRD OFFICES, DESTROYED FURNITURE, BROKE WINDOWS, AND TRIED TO SET IT ON FIRE BEFORE BEING REMOVED AGAIN. AFTER THESE INITIAL CONFRONTATIONS THE AGITATORS APPARENTLY SEIZED A POLICE STATION IN THE PRD AREA AND REPORTEDLY TRIED TO SET THE REVENUE DEPARTMENT ON FIRE. IN SUBSEQUENT BROADCASTS, THE GOVERNMENT RADIO

HAS APPEALED FOR BLOOD DONORS, WARNED PEOPLE TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLED AREAS, AND IMPOSED A 2200-0530 CITY-WIDE CURFEW. SERIOUS ARMED CONFLICT HAS BROKEN OUT IN THE AREA OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY AND THE PRD OFFICES. INITIAL REPORTS FROM RTG SOURCES SUGGEST THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME 130 CASUALTIES, INCLUDING 14 KILLED (12 STUDENTS AND TWO POLICE).

4. THE ARMY HAS DEPLOYED SOLDIERS AND TANKS IN THE AFFECTED AREA. AN EYE WITNESS REPORTS THAT 20 MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS WERE SHOT DOWN IN THE AREA OF THE PRD OFFICES. AN EMBASSY LOCAL EMPLOYEE REPORTS SEEING 30-40 WOUNDED STUDENTS AT ONE HOSPITAL ALONE. THE ARMY IS PREPARING TO ASSAULT THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY WHERE A LARGE NUMBER OF AGITATORS ARE LOCATED. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT GOVERNMENT TANKS ARE IN POSITION NEAR THE UNIVERSITY, SPECIFICALLY IN FRONT OF THE ROYAL HOTEL AND THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY.

5. ANTI-AMERICAN THEMES HAVE CONTINUED. MOST OF THESE STATEMENTS WERE DIRECTED AT THE ASSOCIATION OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITH THE THAI LEADERSHIP. AS THE DEMONSTRATIONS CLIMAXED, STUDENT LEADERS CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT FOR "FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH VIETNAM, AND USING AMERICAN MONEY TO PAY GOVERNMENT WORKERS TO SUPPRESS PEACEFUL STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS." STUDENTS ALSO PUBLICLY CRITICIZED PRAPHAT FOR PERMITTING U.S. USE OF AIR BASES IN THAILAND.

6. IN VIEW OF THE OCTOBER 14 ESCALATION TO VIOLENCE, THE EMBASSY HAS ALERTED ALL MISSION ELEMENTS OF THE CURFEW, AND HAS REQUESTED PEOPLE TO STAY AWAY FROM THE AREA OF CONFRONTATION. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN IN CLOSE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BANGKO 16033 141040Z

TOUCH WITH THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE TWO HIGH SCHOOLS AMERICANS ATTEND, AND OTHER PRIVATE GROUPS.

7. COMMENT: THE NEW ELEMENT SINCE OCTOBER 13 IS A SPLIT IN THE STUDENT MOVEMENT, WITH A SMALL GROUP OF RADICALS HAVING PROVOKED AN ESCALATION TO VIOLENCE. WHILE THE GOVERNMENT EXERCISED SOME RESTRAINT EARLY ON OCTOBER 14, IT OBVIOUSLY FELT THAT IT HAD TO STOP GIVING GROUND IN THE FACE OF FORCEABLE ENTRY INTO OFFICIAL BUILDINGS SUCH AS THE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS. INCREASED GOVERNMENT/STUDENT ANTI-PATHY AND CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN THE UNFORTUNATE RESULT. A SENIOR THAI ARMY GENERAL HAS PASSED WORD TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THE RTG WANTED HIM TO KNOW THAT THE GOVERNMENT FELT IT HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO USE

FORCE AGAINST THE AGITATORS BUT THAT FORCE WOULD BE
KEPT TO THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM. AS OF 1600 OCTOBER 14
CONFRONTATION BETWEEN RTG SECURITY FORCES (ARMY, NAVY
AND POLICE) AND SEVERAL THOUSAND AGITATORS WAS CONFINED
TO A SEVERAL SQUARE BLOCK AREA IN THE CENTER OF THE
CITY BUT PROSPECTS WERE FOR FURTHER DIFFICULTY BEFORE
PEACE IS RESTORED. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER DURING
THE NEXT SEVERAL HOURS.
UNGER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, CASUALTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO16033
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS UNGER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731033/aaaaayls.tel
Line Count: 178
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BANGKOK 16029
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <27-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANTI-GOVERNMENT RIOTS IN BANGKOK
TAGS: PINS, PFOR, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005